

REMARKS

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner requested restriction to the following groups of claims: Group I of claims 1-30, 33-37, and 39-41; Group II of claims 1-30 and 33-38; and Group III of claim 31.

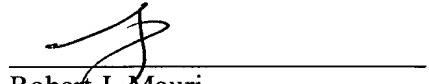
Regarding the restriction requirement, Applicants elect Group I (claims 1-30, 33-37, and 39-41) with traverse. The claims of Group I and Group II overlap: claims 1-30 and 33-37 are common to both Groups I and II. Because the claims of Group I and II overlap, then the groups, subgroups, and references searched for Group I will *directly* be applicable to Group II and as such the search made for at least Groups I and II can be made without serious burden to the Examiner. MPEP §803 states the following: “If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions.”

Perhaps Group II should include only claim 38, which would provide no overlap between Groups I and II. Furthermore, Applicants note that claim 32 is not assigned to any Group. As claim 32 is dependent on independent claim 31, it is probable that claim 32 should be assigned to Group III. However, Applicants respectfully request clarification of these issues and therefore traverse the restriction requirement.

Based on these arguments, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the restriction requirement. Nonetheless, Applicants restate that Group I is elected with traverse.

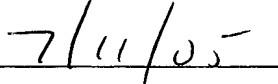
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Respectfully submitted:


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Date


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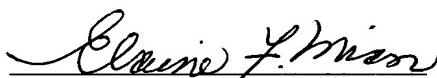
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